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California Basic Educational Skills Test - Reading

Test Prep CBEST-Section-2-Reading

Version Demo

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Topic Break Down

Topic	No. of Questions
Topic 1, Comprehension and Analysis	117
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QUESTION NO: 1

A government report addressing concerns about the many implications of prenatal and newborn genetic testing outlined policy guidelines and legislative recommendations intended to avoid involuntary and ineffective testing and to protect confidentiality. The report recommended that all such screening be voluntary. Citing results of two different voluntary newborn screening programs, the report said these programs can achieve compliance rates equal to or better than those of mandatory programs. State health departments might be wise to eventually mandate the offering of tests for diagnosing treatable conditions in newborns; however, careful pilot studies for conditions diagnosable at birth need to be done first. Although the report asserted that it would prefer that all screening be voluntary, it did note that if a state elects to mandate newborn screening for a particular condition, the state should do so only if there is strong evidence that a newborn would benefit from effective treatment at the earliest possible age. Newborn screening is the most common type of genetic screening today. More than four million newborns are tested annually so that effective treatment can be started in a few hundred infants. Obtaining informed consent—a process that would include educating participants, not just processing documents—would enhance voluntary participation. When offered testing, parents should receive comprehensive counseling, which should be nondirective. Relevant medical advice, however, is recommended for treatable or preventable conditions.

On the basis of above passage please answer the following question

According to the passage, how many infants are treated for genetic disorders as a result of newborn screening?

A. dozens

B. hundreds

C. thousands

D. millions

E. It is not possible to tell from the information in the passage.

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

The correct answer is **hundreds**. The passage directly states that more than four million newborns are tested each year “so that effective treatment can be started in a few hundred infants.” Thus, although screening reaches millions of newborns, the number identified as needing and able to receive effective treatment is described specifically as a few hundred. This is a straightforward detail-retrieval question: the answer comes from matching the question’s focus on infants treated as a result of screening with the passage’s statement about treatment beginning after testing. The wording “a few hundred” supports the broader answer choice “hundreds,” rather than requiring an exact numerical count. Newborn screening programs are designed to identify certain serious conditions early enough for prompt intervention, which can prevent or reduce harmful outcomes for affected infants. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention explains that newborn screening identifies babies with selected conditions shortly after birth so they can receive timely care and treatment: CDC: About Newborn Screening. The Health Resources and Services Administration likewise describes newborn screening as a public-health program intended to identify conditions for which early treatment can improve outcomes: HRSA: About Newborn Screening.

QUESTION NO: 2

(1) Urban trees do more than make city streets attractive. Their leaves intercept rainfall, slowing the amount of water that reaches storm drains during heavy storms. Their roots also help keep soil from washing away. In summer, tree canopies shade pavement and buildings, reducing the heat absorbed by concrete and asphalt. Because neighborhoods with fewer trees can become significantly hotter than nearby greener areas, many cities have begun planting trees where shade is scarce.

(2) Planting, however, is only the first step. A young tree may need watering, pruning, and protection from lawn equipment for several years. In addition, a tree selected for one location may fail in another. A species that grows well in a spacious park, for example, may not tolerate the limited soil, reflected heat, or overhead utility lines found along a commercial street. For this reason, successful urban forestry programs consider both the number of trees planted and the conditions necessary for those trees to survive.

On the basis of above passage please answer the following question.

Which of the following can be inferred from the passage?

A. All city neighborhoods receive the same amount of shade.

B. Tree planting may help reduce temperature differences among neighborhoods.

C. Storm drains are the main cause of high neighborhood temperatures.

D. Concrete and asphalt prevent trees from growing in cities.

E. Urban trees need no care after their first year.

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

The passage says that neighborhoods with fewer trees can be hotter than nearby greener areas and that cities plant trees where shade is scarce. Therefore, increasing tree cover may help reduce differences in neighborhood temperatures.

QUESTION NO: 3

Community Garden Guidelines

Garden plots are assigned for one growing season and may not be transferred to another person. Each gardener is responsible for keeping paths beside the plot clear of weeds and debris. Water is available from April through October; gardeners should use hoses only while they are present and should turn off the water before leaving. Fruit and vegetables grown in a plot may be taken home, but produce from common areas may be harvested only during scheduled volunteer workdays. Tools borrowed from the shed must be cleaned and returned before the shed closes.

On the basis of above passage please answer the following question.

The primary purpose of the passage is to

A. encourage residents to start a community garden.

B. describe the history of a community garden.

C. explain rules for using a community garden.

D. advertise vegetables grown in a community garden.

E. compare gardening methods used in different seasons.

ANSWER: C

Explanation:

The passage provides rules for people using the community garden. It addresses plot assignments, maintenance, water use, harvesting, and borrowed tools. Therefore, its purpose is to explain gardeners' responsibilities and permitted activities.

QUESTION NO: 4

Library Lending Rules

Materials borrowed from the Central Library are due three weeks after checkout. Items may be renewed once if no other borrower has requested them. Most books and audiobooks may be returned to any branch. Museum passes, laptop computers, and items borrowed through interlibrary loan must be returned directly to the Central Library service desk. A borrower who returns an item after its due date may continue to check out materials, but cannot renew items until all overdue materials have been returned.

On the basis of above passage please answer the following question.

The primary purpose of the passage is to

A. persuade borrowers to visit the Central Library.

B. describe the history of the library system.

C. explain procedures for borrowing and returning library materials.

D. compare the collections at different library branches.

E. encourage borrowers to request more materials.

ANSWER: C

Explanation:

The passage provides practical information about due dates, renewals, return locations, and the effect of overdue materials. Its purpose is to explain rules for borrowing and returning library materials.

QUESTION NO: 5

(1) In many western cities, historic photographs have become useful sources of environmental information. A photograph showing a creek before a neighborhood was developed may reveal where the creek once overflowed during winter storms. Old images can also show the extent of wetlands, tree cover, or shoreline vegetation that has since disappeared.

(2) Such photographs must be interpreted carefully. A camera records only one location at one moment, and its angle may hide important features. In addition, early photographers often chose dramatic views rather than ordinary ones. For these reasons, researchers compare photographs with maps, written records, and physical evidence before drawing conclusions about past landscapes.

On the basis of above passage please answer the following question.

Which of the following can be inferred from the passage?

A. Every historic photograph was taken for scientific purposes.

B. Researchers can identify all former wetlands from photographs alone.

C. A single photograph may provide incomplete evidence about a landscape.

D. Physical evidence is less useful than written records.

E. Neighborhood development always causes creeks to disappear.

ANSWER: C

Explanation:

The passage supports the inference that a single photograph is usually insufficient for reaching a reliable conclusion about a past landscape. It explains that a photograph captures one place at one time, may hide features because of its angle, and may show an unusually dramatic scene. Researchers therefore compare photographs with several other kinds of evidence.

QUESTION NO: 6

Ratatouille is a dish that has grown in popularity worldwide over the last few years. Essentially, ratatouille is a vegetable stew, which usually features eggplant, zucchini, tomato, peppers, and garlic, chopped, mixed together, sauteed briefly, and finally, cooked slowly over low heat. As the vegetables cook slowly, they make their own broth, which may be extended with a little tomato paste. The name ratatouille comes from the French word touiller, meaning to stir or mix together.

On the basis of above passage please answer the following question

According to the information presented in the passage, what should one do immediately after chopping the vegetables?

A. saute them

B. mix them together

C. cook them slowly over low heat

D. add tomato paste

E. add garlic

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

The correct answer is **"**

mix them together

" because the passage presents the preparation steps in a clear chronological sequence: the vegetables are "chopped, mixed together, sauteed briefly, and finally, cooked slowly over low heat." The word order directly identifies mixing as the action that follows chopping. This is a straightforward detail-retrieval question: rather than drawing on outside knowledge about cooking ratatouille, the reader should locate the relevant sentence and track the sequence of actions exactly as it is stated. The passage also reinforces the idea of combining the ingredients through its explanation that the dish's name derives from a French word meaning "to stir or mix together," although the ordered cooking sentence alone supplies the needed evidence. Careful attention to transition language such as "and finally" helps readers distinguish the immediate next step from later stages in a process. This use of explicit textual evidence reflects the reading skills assessed by the CBEST, which includes identifying stated information and understanding relationships among details. See the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing's CBEST examination information and the CBEST testing website.

QUESTION NO: 7

A healthy diet with proper nutrition is essential for maintaining good overall health. Since vitamins were discovered earlier in this century, people have routinely been taking vitamin supplements for this purpose. The Recommended Dietary Allowance

(RDA) is a frequently used nutritional standard for maintaining optimal health. The RDA specifies the recommended amount of a number of nutrients for people of both sexes and in many different age groups. The National Research Council's Committee on Diet and Health has proposed a definition of the RDA to be that amount of a nutrient which meets the needs of 98 percent of the population. The RDA approach _____. First, it is based on the assumption that it is possible to accurately define nutritional requirements for a given group. However, individual nutritional requirements can vary widely within each group. The efficiency with which a person converts food intake into nutrients can also vary widely. Certain foods when eaten in combination actually prevent the absorption of nutrients. For example, spinach combined with milk reduces the amount of calcium available to the body from the milk. Also, the RDA approach specifies a different dietary requirement for each age and sex; however, it is clearly unrealistic to expect a homemaker to prepare a different menu for each family member. Still, although we cannot rely solely upon RDA to ensure our overall long-term health, it can be a useful guide so long as its limitations are recognized.

On the basis of above passage please answer the following question With which of the following would the author most likely agree?

A. The RDA approach should be replaced by a more realistic nutritional guide.

B. The RDA approach should be supplemented with more specific nutritional guides.

C. In spite of its flaws, the RDA approach is definitely the best guide to good nutrition.

D. The RDA approach is most suitable for a large family.

E. The RDA approach is too complicated for most consumers.

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

The RDA approach should be supplemented with more specific nutritional guides. The author presents the RDA as useful, but explicitly qualifies that usefulness: it cannot by itself ensure long-term health because nutrient needs and nutrient absorption differ substantially among individuals, even within the same age and sex category. The passage also notes practical limits on applying separate recommendations to every member of a household. Therefore, the author's position is not to discard the RDA, but to use it as a general starting point alongside guidance that can account for individual circumstances, dietary patterns, and practical needs. This conclusion follows directly from the final statement that the RDA remains a useful guide when its limitations are recognized. In modern nutrition terminology, RDAs are population-based intake recommendations designed to meet the needs of nearly all healthy people in a defined life-stage and sex group, rather than personalized prescriptions for every individual. The National Academies' overview of Dietary Reference Intakes explains this population-based role: Using the Dietary Reference Intakes. The National Institutes of Health also describes RDAs as recommended average daily intake levels sufficient for nearly all healthy individuals in particular demographic groups: Dietary Reference Intakes.

QUESTION NO: 8

In Ralph Waldo Emerson's view, although individual consciousness will eventually be lost, every living thing is part of the blessed Unity, part of the transcendent "over-soul" which is the universe. And so, in the main body of his philosophy, Emerson accepts the indifference of Nature to the individual life, and does not struggle against it. His acceptance of Nature as tending toward overall unity and good in spite of her indifference to the individual is curiously and ironically akin to the Puritan acceptance of the doctrine of Divine Election. In his "Personal Narrative" Jonathan Edwards writes that he finally has "a delightful conviction" of the doctrine of God's sovereignty, of God's choosing according to His divine and arbitrary will, "whom he would to eternal life, and rejecting whom he pleased . . . ."He writes that the doctrine had formerly seemed _____ to him; however, it had finally come to seem "exceedingly pleasant, bright, and sweet." In "Fate," Emerson writes that "Nature will not mind drowning a man or a woman, but swallows your ship like a grain of dust," but that "the central intention of Nature [is] harmony and joy. Let us build altars to the Beautiful Necessity. . . ."

On the basis of above passage please answer the following question

Which of the following statements would LEAST effectively support the view of both Emerson and Edwards toward the nature of the universe?

A. God notices the fall of a sparrow.

B. God is all-powerful and all-wise.

C. The universe is a harmonious place.

D. Nature is beautiful and good.

E. One should accept the universal plan.

ANSWER: A

Explanation:

"God notices the fall of a sparrow." is the statement that least supports the shared outlook presented in the passage because it emphasizes attentive concern for the fate of a single individual. The comparison between Emerson and Edwards instead rests on their acceptance of a larger order whose purposes transcend individual outcomes. Emerson describes Nature as capable of destroying a person without concern, while nevertheless moving toward an overarching harmony and joy. The individual's loss therefore does not alter or interrupt Nature's comprehensive design. Similarly, Edwards's eventual delight in divine sovereignty reflects acceptance of a divine will that chooses according to purposes not determined by an individual's wishes or apparent deservingness. In the passage's framing, both thinkers direct attention away from personal preservation and toward submission to a universal or divine order. A claim that God specifically notices the fall of even one small creature foregrounds individual care, making it poorly aligned with the stated parallel of indifference to particular lives within a greater plan. For helpful background on Emerson's philosophy of unity and Nature, see the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy's Emerson entry. Context on Edwards's theology of divine sovereignty appears in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy's Jonathan Edwards entry.

QUESTION NO: 9

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On the basis of above Index please answer the following question

On what cause of forest destruction does the author of the textbook focus most, from the evidence of the index?

A. industrialization

B. fire damage

C. railroads

D. ecological decline

E. scientific forestry

ANSWER: A

Explanation:

The correct answer is **industrialization**. The question asks specifically which cause of *forest destruction* receives the greatest focus, so the relevant evidence is the set of subentries under “forest destruction and ecological decline.” Industrialization is listed for pages 156–173. That is an uninterrupted span of eighteen pages, indicating substantially sustained coverage of the relationship between industrialization and forest destruction. The other listed causes have shorter page spans or isolated page references. A careful reader should therefore compare the amount of page coverage attached to each cause rather than simply count related index headings elsewhere in the index. For example, the separate entries concerning fires, arson, and fire protection may show that fire is discussed often in the book, but they do not establish that it is the cause most extensively treated under the specific topic of forest destruction. This is an index-based inference question: the page range functions as evidence of the relative depth of discussion. Identifying the scope of the question, locating the matching index entry, and comparing the cited page ranges are core reading-analysis skills assessed in the CBEST Reading section. See the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing’s CBEST information page and the California educator examinations portal.

QUESTION NO: 10

(1) Milton Hershey was born near the small village of Derry Church, Pennsylvania, in 1857. It was a modest beginning that did not foretell his later popularity. Milton only attended school through the fourth grade; at that point, he was apprenticed to a printer in a nearby town. Fortunately for all chocolate lovers,Milton did not excel as a printer. After a while, he left the printing business and was apprenticed to a Lancaster, Pennsylvania, candy maker. It was apparent he had found his calling in life and, at the age of eighteen, he opened his own candy store in Philadelphia. In spite of his talents as a candy maker, the shop failed after six years. (2)Milton Hershey’s fans today may be surprised to learn that his first candy success came with the manufacture of caramel. After the failure of his Philadelphia store, Milton headed for Denver, where he learned the art of caramel making. There he took a job with a local manufacturer who insisted on using fresh milk in making his caramels; Milton saw that this made the caramels especially tasty. After a time in Denver, he once again attempted to open his own candy-making businesses, in Chicago, New Orleans, and New York City. Finally, in 1886, he went to Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where he raised the money necessary to try again. This company—the Lancaster Caramel Company—made Milton’s reputation as a master candy maker. (3) In 1893, Milton attended the Chicago International Exposition, where he

saw a display of German chocolate-making implements. Captivated by the equipment, he purchased it for his Lancaster candy factory and began producing chocolate, which he used for coating his caramels. By the next year, production had grown to include cocoa, sweet chocolate, and baking chocolate. The Hershey Chocolate company was born in 1894 as a subsidiary of the Lancaster Caramel Company. Six years later, Milton sold the caramel company, but retained the rights, and the equipment, to make chocolate. He believed that a large market of chocolate consumers was waiting for someone to produce reasonably priced candy. He was right. (4)Milton Hershey returned to the village where he had been born, in the heart of dairy country, and opened his chocolate-manufacturing plant. With access to all the fresh milk he needed, he began producing the finest milk chocolate. The plant that opened in a small Pennsylvania village in 1905 is today the largest chocolate factory in the world. The confections created at this facility are favorites in the U.S. and internationally. (5) The area where the factory is located is now known as Hershey, Pennsylvania. Within the first decades of its existence, the town thrived, as did the chocolate business. A bank, a school, churches, a department store, even a park and a trolley system all appeared in short order. Soon, the town even had a zoo. Today, a visit to the area reveals the Hershey Medical Center, Milton Hershey School, and Hershey's Chocolate World, a theme park where visitors are greeted by a giant Reese's Peanut Butter Cup. All of these things—and a huge number of happy chocolate lovers—were made possible because a caramel maker visited the Chicago Exposition of 1893!

On the basis of above passage please answer the following question

Which of the following statements is supported by information in the passage?

A. Chocolate is popular in every country in the world.

B. The Hershey Chocolate Company's factory is near Derry Church, Pennsylvania.

C. Chocolate had never been manufactured in the United States before Milton Hershey did it.

D. The Hershey Chocolate Company is run by Milton Hershey's children.

E. The Hershey Chocolate Company has branches in Chicago, New Orleans, and New York City.

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

The Hershey Chocolate Company's factory is near Derry Church, Pennsylvania. is supported by the passage because the location is established through two connected details. First, the passage identifies Milton Hershey's birthplace as near the small village of Derry Church, Pennsylvania. Later, it states that he returned to the village where he had been born and opened his chocolate-manufacturing plant there. Connecting those explicitly stated facts supports the conclusion that the plant—and thus the Hershey Chocolate Company factory described in the passage—was located near Derry Church. The passage further identifies the factory site as a small Pennsylvania village that later became known as Hershey, Pennsylvania, reinforcing that the factory was built in the same home-area setting discussed at the beginning. This is a supported-information question: the reader need not supply outside assumptions, because the answer follows directly by linking the stated birthplace location with the stated location of the factory. Historical background from The Hershey Community Archives likewise places Milton Hershey's early life in the Derry Church area. The company's historical overview also describes the establishment of the chocolate factory in Hershey, Pennsylvania; see The Hershey Company's history page.

QUESTION NO: 11

Library Lending Rules

Materials borrowed from the Central Library are due three weeks after checkout. Items may be renewed once if no other borrower has requested them. Most books and audiobooks may be returned to any branch. Museum passes, laptop computers, and items borrowed through interlibrary loan must be returned directly to the Central Library service desk. A borrower who returns an item after its due date may continue to check out materials, but cannot renew items until all overdue materials have been returned.

On the basis of above passage please answer the following question.

Which of the following is true of a borrower who has an overdue book?

A. The borrower may not check out any materials.

B. The borrower may renew only audiobooks.

C. The borrower may check out materials but may not renew items.

D. The borrower must return all materials to the nearest branch.

E. The borrower may renew an item twice.

ANSWER: C

Explanation:

The passage explains that a borrower with overdue materials may still check out materials. However, that borrower cannot renew items until all overdue materials have been returned.